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March 28, 2000



Brigadier General Carl Strock
Department of the Army
Walla Walla District Corps of Engineers
201 North Third Avenue
Walla Walla, Washington 99362-1876
Attention: Lower Snake River Study

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Dear General Strock:

Franklin PUD wants to do what's best for the fish and avoid radical ideas that will clearly have drastic results - not just to the economy but to our environment as well. There is no single decision or process that will lead us to salmon recovery overnight. We must pursue salmon recovery across all life stages, and at each level of government and community in the region. Breaching or removing the dams on the Snake River would cause devastating impacts to our area. Franklin and Walla Walla counties, as well as the entire northwest, depend heavily on the irrigation, transportation, and electricity that the dams along the Snake River provide.

1 Approximately 37,000 acres in Franklin and Walla Walla counties are irrigated from the reservoir above Ice Harbor Dam on the Snake River. This irrigation provides jobs to an estimated 3500 workers employed on these farms. Should these dams be removed, the loss of irrigated farmland producing commodities would result in a loss of \$72.2 million in annual economic benefits according to federal estimates.

2 Dam breaching suggests that all barge cargo be hauled by truck or train cars. Since the Columbia-Snake River system supports a barge shipping system for freight and commodities from 43 states this suggestion would trade a false solution for a certain disaster. Replacement of this system would add over 700,000 semi trucks to our roads greatly increasing carbon monoxide releases into the atmosphere and overtaxing our local highway system; and, would force us to utilize the already backed up rail system that doesn't have enough train cars available.

Besides all the loss of irrigated farm land, loss of economic benefits, added pollution to the atmosphere, and overtaxing our highway systems, dam breaching would eliminate a large supply of power generation. The four lower Snake River dams produce enough clean, reliable, renewable energy to power the entire city of Seattle. Our region can not afford to lose the energy produced by these renewable energy sources.

We know there is no magic solution to our fish problems in the Northwest. Fish runs all over the region are in decline, not just the fish that encounter dams. The people in the Northwest don't want empty gestures at helping fish; they want solutions that make sense - for the fish and for all of us. Taking out the dams on the lower Snake River is a false solution. The dams are part of a much larger system that provides navigation, low-cost hydroelectricity, and flood control, as well as revenue to help salmon.

Sincerely,

Del Latham
President
Franklin PUD Commissioners

Beverly A. Cochrane
Vice-President

Marvin Baile
Secretary

LTR 2000-068

THE POWER IS YOURS